

# Staying in Touch

## Stay in touch with emergency officials

Following a hurricane, staying advised of information from the Lake County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is essential in helping your family recover. To learn of important safety notices, monitor radio and television reports. Listed below are some of the links the public has to the latest post-hurricane information.

### TELEPHONE

**Citizens Information Line** — Typically staffed 24 hours a day following a hurricane, residents can call (352) 253-9999 to get up-to-date information.

### ONLINE

**www.lakecountyfl.gov** — The portal for Lake County Government, this Web site is updated frequently during emergency situations to provide residents with important information.

### RADIO

**WLBE 790 AM** — WLBE, of Leesburg, broadcasts a remote feed from the Lake County EOC.

**WVLG 640 AM** — WVLG, of The Villages, also broadcasts to many Lake County residents.

### TELEVISION

**Government access stations:** Bright House channel 99; Florida Cable channel 4. Lake-Sumter Community College Television (*Comcast cable channel 13*) and LakeFront TV (*Comcast cable channel 22*) air news conferences from the Lake County EOC on all government access channels.

**Network television stations:** Regular updates can be seen on NBC affiliate WESH-TV channel 2; CBS affiliate WKMG-TV channel 6; ABC affiliate WFTV-TV channel 9; FOX35 channel 35; Central Florida News 13 (*Bright House Network cable only*).

### NEWSPAPER

**Daily newspapers:** Lake Sentinel, The Daily Commercial, The Villages Daily Sun, Ocala Star-Banner



Administration Building  
16140 U.S. Highway 441  
Eustis, Florida 32726-6508  
Phone: (352) 589-6424  
www.lakechd.com



315 W. Main St., Suite 441  
Tavares, Florida 32778-7800  
Phone: (352) 343-9420  
Fax: (352) 343-9728  
www.lakecountyfl.gov

## Lake County's SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM



### Lake County Department of Public Safety *Emergency Management Division*

#### Lake County Administration Building

315 W. Main St., Suite 441  
Tavares, Florida 32778-7800  
Phone: (352) 343-9420  
Fax: (352) 343-9728  
www.lakecountyfl.gov

# FAQs

## What are special needs?

According to House Bill 7121 passed during the 2006 State Legislature, special needs is defined as “persons who would need assistance during evacuations and sheltering because of physical, mental, cognitive impairment, or sensory disabilities.” The bill further states: “Each local emergency management agency in the state shall maintain a registry of persons with special needs located within the jurisdiction of the local agency.”

## Why should special needs individuals register?

It is important that individuals with special needs register with the Lake County Emergency Management Division. During a disaster such as a hurricane, Emergency Management officials need to be aware of individuals with special needs to plan accordingly and have the ability to check on their condition.

## How do I register for special needs?

To receive a special needs application, call the Emergency Management office at (352) 343-9420. Mail the completed application to Lake County Emergency Management, 315 W. Main St., room 441, Tavares, FL 32778. A committee reviews each application and makes a determination of the applicant's special needs category.

**Category I** If the applicant chooses not to find alternative sheltering options, space is arranged for the applicant and caregiver at one of the County's special needs shelters.

**Category II** Applicants should find alternative sheltering locations in the event of an emergency as their particular medical condition requires more complex care than can be provided in the County's special needs shelters.

**Category III** Applicants are registrants in the County's system. This alerts emergency management to registrants' conditions and allows officials to check on them after a disaster. The applicant can choose to find alternative sheltering or stay in one of the County's public shelters.

## How will I know if I meet the requirements for special needs?

The Emergency Management office will mail out a letter to all applicants of the program based on their medical needs. If at any time changes occur to your health or if you happen to change residence or contact numbers, please call the Emergency Management office at (352) 343-9420 to make appropriate changes to your special needs information. In the spring of each year, the Emergency Management office mails letters to special needs registrants asking for them to update their special needs information.

## When should special needs individuals shelter at a County facility?

If a resident with special needs lives in a manufactured home and has not made evacuation plans with family members or friends, sheltering at a County facility is recommended. Due to the lack of comfort at a County facility, special needs residents are encouraged to seek shelter at a site-built home of family or friend.

## When will Emergency Management officials contact me?

After successfully completing the special needs registration process, you will be contacted in the event of an emergency. A prerecorded message will advise you to prepare and activate your family disaster plan. If you have not made personal evacuation measures or have not secured an alternate sheltering location with a family member or friend, sheltering at in a County facility is a temporary safe haven. For those who need transportation, a number will be provided to call.

## Can I bring my pet to a County special needs shelter?

All of Lake County's special needs shelters accept pets. Pets must be brought in a carrier that is marked with the owner's name, address and two phone numbers. Owners must have documentation of up-to-date rabies vaccinations for their pets. Owners are responsible for taking care of their pets. It is recommended pet owners bring minimal pet supplies, such as food and water, to a County special needs shelter.

## What will the accommodations be like at the County special needs shelter?

While Lake County's special needs shelters are high on safety, residents may tend to find the comfort level more accommodating in a site-built home of a family member or friend. Special needs shelters do not have the proper facilities for special dietary considerations nor do they have a surplus of nurses on duty. All special needs residents sheltering at a County facility are required to be accompanied with their primary caregiver.

## Family disaster plan

When a disaster strikes, there may not be much time to act. Preparing now for an emergency will give you and your family time to enact a safe and well thought-out plan. For residents with special needs, a family disaster plan should include where you plan to shelter during a disaster. A plan of action for you and your family can go a long way toward reducing potential suffering from any type of disaster that could strike. If you must evacuate your home, it's always best to take your pets with you. Lake County Government provides pet sheltering at all eight primary shelters. All pets accepted at the shelters must be crated and have documentation of up-to-date rabies vaccinations.

## Shelter survival kit

If you decide to evacuate from your residence — or if authorities advise you to evacuate — take only items that are essential to you. While all the items in a shelter survival kit are essential, the most important for residents with special needs is their medications.

- At least two weeks of medications
- Any medical equipment and supplies you use at home (*i.e. nebulizers, adult incontinence pads, dietary products, etc.*)
- Blankets, pillows and sleeping bags
- Basic toiletries (*toothbrush, deodorant, etc.*)
- Extra clothing
- Battery-operated radio and flashlight
- Personal items, including books and magazines
- Important papers, such as valid identification